

---

## **Executive Member For Neighbourhood Services and Advisory Panel**

19 January 2009

Joint Report of the Director of Neighbourhood Services and Director of Resources

### **Revenue Budget 2009/10 – Neighbourhood Services Fees and Charges**

#### **Summary**

- 1 The report advises Members of the proposed fees and charges for Neighbourhood Services for the financial year 2009/10 and the anticipated increase in income which they will generate. The Annex 1 to the report sets out the detail of the individual charges.

#### **Background**

- 2 The fees and charges for Neighbourhood Services are complex and varied. Some are controlled by regulation, some by national guidelines and others by market forces or the cost of administering the service. Elsewhere in these budget papers Members are advised of the effect on the service of budget reductions. The level of fees and charges has been set against a background of financial constraint and service reductions. Income is a key factor in setting budgets, and currently is approximately £2.7 million. In ensuring a balanced budget, it is therefore essential that income is at least maintained, if not improved. It is proposed to introduce an above inflation increase in a small number of areas as part of the Council's savings proposals to reduce the associated net service costs.

#### **Consultation**

3. This paper forms part of the Council's budget consultation. The other streams being undertaken include a recently held public meeting where participants sat at tables and tried to produce a balanced budget after considering growth and saving priorities, a leaflet circulated city wide with a fold-out return part and a web-based process. The taxi trade were also consulted on proposals.

#### **Options**

4. This section sets out the key elements for Members' consideration. Only those with significant income are highlighted.
5. **Registrars Service:**
  - **Discretionary Fees:** Above inflation increases are proposed in respect of some fees generating additional income of £14k (including saving proposal of £13.8k).

- **Statutory Fees:** Some fees that are set by government are yet to be announced for 2009/10 but it is currently not anticipated these will be increased.
6. **Bereavement Services:** It is proposed to increase the cremation fee from £563 to £599. The increase, incorporating other proposed changes and new income streams, is estimated to generate additional income in the next financial year of £79k (including saving proposals of £47.5k).
  7. **Environmental Health:** A broadly inflation matching increase is proposed, although some fees that are set by government are yet to be announced or are currently being consulted on for 2009/10.
  8. **Trading Standards:** Most fees are determined by government or LACORS (Local Authorities Coordinators of Regulatory Services) and some are yet to be announced for 2009/10.
  9. **Regulatory Services:**
    - **Discretionary Fees:** A broadly inflation matching increase is proposed.
    - **Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005:** The fees are set by statute and currently there are no proposals to increase fees in 2009/10.
    - **Pest Control:** It is proposed to increase pest control treatment charges above inflation and also introduce a new charge for visits when no treatment is required generating additional income of £3.9k (including proposed saving of £2.5k). Treatment for rats in commercial situations and non rat treatments will increase by £2.50 (incl. VAT) and rat treatments in non commercial situations by £0.50 (incl. VAT). Rat treatments are free to those on income support and a discount introduced in 2006/07 to discount all non rat treatments by 50% for those on income support will continue.
  10. **Taxi Licences:** Legislation permits local authorities to recover the costs of administering the taxi licensing function through the levy of fees. At the end of 2007/08 the taxi account was in surplus by £5.0k. The latest projection for 2008/09 is that the account will be in surplus by £5.1k at the yearend. To take account of predicted changes in volume and increased costs in 2009/10 it is proposed to freeze most fees and offset this by introducing a small number new fees. This will bring the account into balance by 31 March 2010.
  11. **Bulky Household Collection:** An above inflation increase is proposed for bulky household waste collections and bonded asbestos collections. This reflects additional costs, including landfill tax, of collection, and of dealing with the transportation and processing of bonded asbestos (since it can no longer be disposed of at Harewood Whin).
  12. **Hazel Court HWRC - Trade Waste Charges:** It is proposed that trade waste that requires to be disposed of in landfill will be charged at £90 per tonne however waste that can be recycled or composted will be charged at £45 per tonne. Charges proposed also include a minimum fee for using the service, and a minimum percentage of recyclable waste to qualify for the recycling or composting rate per tonne. The charges proposed for trade waste are increasing

by more than inflation to cover additional operating costs, including landfill tax increase at £8 per tonne, site management costs in respect of dealing with trade waste, and include a savings proposal of £17.6k.

13. **Commercial Waste Collection Charges:** The charges proposed for commercial waste collections are increasing by more than inflation to cover additional operating costs, including landfill tax increase at £8 per tonne.
14. **Public Conveniences:** It is not proposed to increase the charge for using public toilets at Parliament Street or Coppergate in 2009/10. It is proposed however to increase the charge for using public toilets at Union Terrace from 30 pence to 40 pence which will generate additional income and a proposed saving of £10k. It is anticipated that a new toilet facility will open in Silver Street to replace Parliament Street in May 2009 and it is proposed to charge 40 pence to use the Silver Street toilets which will generate a proposed saving of £50k.

#### **Corporate Priorities**

15. The differential costs for the trade waste charges going through the Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC), see paragraph 12 above, is structured to encourage traders using the sites to ensure as much waste as possible is recycled. This contributes to the Corporate Priority of 'Decreasing the tonnage of biodegradable waste and recyclable products going to landfill'.

#### **Implications**

##### **Financial Implications**

16. The current income generated from Neighbourhood Services fees and charges is estimated to be £2.7 million. Broadly inflation matching increases are proposed for 2009/10 except for the some registrars fees, cremation charges, pest control, waste collection and trade waste charges. The increases are estimated to generate additional income totalling approximately £194.3k including proposed savings of £157.4k.

##### **Human Resources (HR)**

16. There are no Human Resources implications.

##### **Equalities**

17. There are no equality implications to this report.

##### **Legal**

18. There are no legal implications to this report.

##### **Crime and Disorder**

19. There are no crime and disorder implications to this report.

##### **Information Technology (IT)**

20. There are no information technology implications to this report.

##### **Property**

21. There are no property implications to this report.

##### **Risk Management**

22. Key reporting mechanisms to Members on budget matters will continue to be

through two mid-year monitoring reports and the final Revenue Outturn report for the year. These reports will also address the progress made on investments and savings included in the budgets.

23. The budget setting process always entails a degree of risk as managers attempt to assess known and uncertain future events. As with any budget the key to mitigating risk is prompt monitoring and appropriate management control. As such updated figures and revised corrective actions will be monitored via Directorate Management Teams, Corporate Management Team and the monitor reports during the year.

### **Recommendations**

24. The Executive Member is asked to consider the fees and charges proposals for Neighbourhood Services for 2009/10 contained in this report and provide comments to be submitted to the Budget Executive on 16 February 2009.

Reason: To update the Executive Member on the proposed fees and charges for Neighbourhood Services for 2009/10.

### **Contact Details**

**Author:**

Sarah Kirby  
Finance Manager  
Tel: 553109

**Chief Officers Responsible for the report:**

Terry Collins  
Director of Neighbourhood Services  
Tel: 552003  
Ian Floyd  
Director of Resources  
Tel: 551100

**Report Approved**

**Date** 9/1/09

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

See budget report as part of the agenda

**Annexes**

Annex 1 – Details of individual charges for Neighbourhood Services Fees and Charges